A camera or recording apparatus, it was argued, had no possibility of falsifying the objects or sounds they reproduced; therefore, by emulating them, truthfulness was assured. Such an attitude of mind presupposes that life's outward appearance exhausts its whole nature; if outward appearance is only one among many images of reality, and perhaps not the most significant, then a drawing of Blake's might be more documentary than a photograph of the same subject, and his 'great Atlantic mountains', though unknown to explorers, and unmarked on any map, as significant as the Himalayas.

To keep to the facts is ever the despairing hope of those who feel their lives disintegrating, whose feet are in shifting sand. They hold on to facts like a drowning man on to a floating spar; facts surely will not fail them, though all else fails. Prostrating themselves before facts, appealing to facts for guidance in time of trouble, they credit them with a validity they do not possess, and lay themselves open to deceptions greater than any the imagination can practise. The camera cannot lie, they assure themselves, and when it does lie quite succumb to its falsehoods. An imaginative symbol like the Cross may delude; but because it is imaginative—that is, a product of an understanding of life's totality, and because it is a symbol, with no pretensions to be

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lovely shots, Mr. Priestley 'concocted a little talk about nationalism and the new internationalism of transport and communications/ and the result was 'an excellent little documentary film". In the same way, if Dickens had concocted, instead of a novel, a little talk about, say, urban and rural life, on a basis of the drawings round which he was to write *The Pickwick Papers,* that novel would have been documentary. Mr. Priestley is

appreciative of the 'enthusiasm of these rather solemn young men in high-necked sweaters' who were responsible for the production of successful documentary films like *Drifters* and *Voice of Britain,* who pronounced the word 'film* with hushed solemnity, and who seemed to him 'figures representative of a new world*, but sensibly points out that their claim to portray 'real life' cannot be sub-stantiated. 'Nearly all documentary films,' lie writes, 'seem to be a very romantic heightening of ordinary life, comparable not to the work of a realistic novelist or dramatist, but to the picturesque and highly coloured fictions of the romancer/